

# **MINUTES OF A REGULAR VOTING MEETING OF THE**

## **FAIRFIELD PLANNING COMMISSION**

**APRIL 8, 2015**

Scott Lepsky, Chairman, called the Regular Meeting of the Fairfield Planning Commission to order.

Members present: Scott Lepsky, Don Hassler, Bob Myron, Tom Heisler, Tom Hasselbeck and Ron D'Epifanio.

Motion to excuse Bill Woeste and carried 6 – 0.

### **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING:**

The minutes of the previous meeting, held March 11, 2015, were approved as submitted.

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

#### **Fairfield Pub Update – 465 Nilles Rd.**

The original Conditional Use approval approved September 10, 2014, was given a review period of 6 months after opening. Tim Bachman, Development Services Director, stated that the proposed Fairfield Pub is still not open to the public. Staff believes that the applicant is doing the work in the space himself. Ms. Donovan's memo suggested the Commission extend the review period to six months after business opening or the first meeting in December 2015, whichever comes first.

Scott Lepsky, seconded by Don Hassler, made a motion to approve the extension of the Conditional Use review period to six months after opening or the first meeting in December 2015, whichever comes first. The Conditions of Approval from September 10, 2014 still apply. (attached)

Motion carried 6-0.

#### **Conditional Use Application – Daycare – 3840 Woodridge Blvd.**

Mr. Bachman stated that this was the second application for a daycare at this location. Minutes from the April 10, 2013 meeting were distributed to the Commission from the last application, which was denied. The pond that is behind the facility was an issue then and remains an issue today. At the 2013 meeting, there was also concern regarding the children's play area, which was to be located on the side of the adjacent building. Mr. Bachman recently met with Tom Reed, owner of the property, Mark Abbott, architect for the property, and Commissioner Woeste, to discuss this project. Slides were shown of the location of the project and are attached. The daycare intends to occupy the space in the middle of the building closest to Woodridge Blvd. The space to the right is occupied by a church; the space to the left is vacant and may be used by the daycare in the future. The fenced in play area is proposed in front of the building, partially in the parking lot. There are directional arrows

indicating the drop off area in front of the play area. Between the two buildings, a fence is shown; the type of fence is up for discussion. The Commission wanted a privacy fence with the last application, to block view of the pond. One problem with that, however, is if a child were behind the fence, they couldn't be seen. There is a fence shown on the right side of the building, from the building to the shrubbery. Different slides showed various views of the building, the floor plan, the fence locations, and different examples of fencing that could be used, provided by Ms. Donovan.

Tom Reed, owner of the property, spoke about the daycare. He is willing to do anything the Commission and the state asks to get the daycare approved to operate at this location. Mr. Bachman indicated that letters were sent to the neighboring tenant addresses, but there was no one in attendance for the meeting, nor did anyone call with questions or comments about the proposed daycare. Mr. Reed said he only has two tenants in the whole complex; one is the church next to the daycare.

Claver Pashi, the executive director of the center, spoke regarding the daycare. This is a good location for the daycare and a good use of the space. They plan to have children from 6 weeks of age to 5 years old and school age children before and after school. Safety will be a priority; the children will never be left alone, there will always be an adult present. They intend to have 42 children the first year; 13 infants, 6 toddlers, 14 preschoolers and 11 school age kids. The second year, they are planning for 84 children. By the third year of operation, they will be at full capacity, with 96 children. At that point, they plan to expand into the vacant space to the left. This number of proposed occupants represents about 5% of the market in the Fairfield area.

Dr. Marie Vunda Pashi, the director of the center, spoke regarding the daycare. She has a PhD in Early Childhood Development, with more than 15 years of experience with this age group. She believes that she has the experience and knowledge to know what to do to make sure the teachers are supervising the children properly, 100% of the time. Safety is the main priority; their licensing requires it. The play area is entirely in the front; the children will not be in the back of the building at all to have access to the pond. Right now, there is concrete in the play area, but a soft surface will be installed by someone licensed to do so. Every parent will have to walk their child into the building; they can't just drop them off. Ron D'Epifanio asked what the ratio of employees per child was, per the state licensing requirements. Children 6 weeks to 12 months require 1 teacher per 5 children, toddler age to 36 months requires 1 teacher per 7 children, and preschool age requires 1 teacher per 14 children. When the children are in the playground area, the same ratios are required. The playground is an extension of the classroom; it's part of the teacher's lesson plan. Mr. D'Epifanio is concerned about the proximity of the building to Woodridge Blvd. There was discussion regarding busing for school aged children. The busses drop off right in front of the building, and a teacher will always be outside at the bus stop waiting to walk the children into the building. Mr. D'Epifanio asked what the applicant would do if a teacher called in sick. He wants to be sure they will not be understaffed at any point. Ms. Pashi indicated that there are subs available in case of a call in. He asked if the church was in any way affiliated with the daycare. They are not connected with the church in any way. Scott Lepsky asked how far the play area will be from the "pork chop" (small, landscaped area) in the middle of the lot. There is about a 15 foot space between the two areas. Mr. Lepsky asked if the applicant planned to build out each classroom to "max out" the number of children the state allows per square footage requirements. Mr. Reed indicated that the spaces and

sizes are existing, but there may be a couple of rooms that will be combined.

Tom Heisler discussed the proposed play area. He is concerned about the possibility of cars sliding into the fence during winter. He asked if they planned on having any curbing to prevent cars from hitting the fence. Ms. Pashi told the Commission that there will be no playground time during pickup or drop off times. Mr. Heisler asked if the applicants knew where the playground equipment would be placed in the playground area. Ms. Pashi will be bringing in a designer to plan the placement of the equipment. The fencing for the playground area was discussed. The fence will be high enough so children cannot jump or climb over it. There was discussion on the fence proposed on the right side of the building. Mr. Heisler asked if the brush that the fence was going to be next to was impenetrable. He is concerned about children slipping through and reaching the pond. Mr. Bachman said the intent of the fence was to go all the way to the brush, which is very thick.

Parking was discussed. Tom Hasselbeck asked if the daycare play area and drop off would impact the church parking. Mr. Reed indicated that the church had only 8 members, and meets on Wednesday nights and on Sundays. The daycare will operate from 6:30 am to 6:00 pm, Monday thru Friday. The number of parking spaces is determined by the square footage of the space or the number of seats in a space, whichever is greater. There is extra parking in the lot and on the side of the building.

Mr. Bachman stated that the proposed chain link fencing is undesirable; decorative is preferred. The four foot fence in the play area may not be tall enough to keep children from climbing over it. He told the Commission that they have the ability to require approval for the play area if they desired, or they could let staff take care of it. Mr. Hassler indicated that he prefers that all of the fences match. Mr. Hasselbeck said he thinks it would be helpful for them to have directional arrows painted on the lot while they are striping the lot.

Mr. Hasselbeck said he was on the commission when the first daycare came through, and he didn't like the play area on the side of the building. He thinks this is a better plan than the first submission. He suggested they could frost the bottom half of the window so the children can't see the pond from inside the building. There was discussion on state licensing. The Commission was informed that the state will tour the facility before the license is issued, to make sure all requirements are met.

Scott Lepsky, seconded by Ron D'Epifanio, made a motion to approve the conditional use with the following conditions:

1. A 6 foot decorative fence must be installed between the two buildings and to the right of the building as shown on the site plan. Final fence design and specific field location will be determined after consultation with staff.
2. A minimum of a 4 foot decorative fence must be installed around the outdoor play area. This fence must be of the same fencing material/design as item 1. Permits are required for all fencing.
3. The parking lot must be striped and directional striping for the drop off area also must be completed, as per the site plan prepared by Mark Abbott.

4. The soft surface ground material proposed in the outdoor play area is to be a solid durable material such as solid rubber, meeting the state standards.

Motion carried 6-0.

Mr. Clemmons asked why this application is a Conditional Use instead of a minor modification. The previous daycare was treated as a minor modification of the PUD. Mr. Bachman stated that both are allowed and staff felt a Conditional Use was appropriate in this situation.

### **ELECTIONS/POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

Elections were held. The following positions were unanimously approved:

Chairman (Scott Lepsky)

Vice-Chairman (Don Hassler)

Secretary (Lynda McGuire)

Representative to the Board of Zoning Appeals (Scott Lepsky)

Representative to the Design Review Committee (Tom Hasselbeck)

OKI Representative (Tim Bachman)

The 2015 Planning Commission Policies and Procedures were unanimously approved.

### **REPORTS/STUDIES/GENERAL DISCUSSION**

Mr. Bachman reminded the Commission of the Joint Public with City Council on Monday, April 13 at 7:00 pm regarding The Cove of Village Green project.

Being no further business, the meeting adjourned.

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Scott Lepsky, Chairman

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Lynda McGuire, Secretary